

Film Monthly Review

Vol. 7 No. 2

FEBRUARY 1949

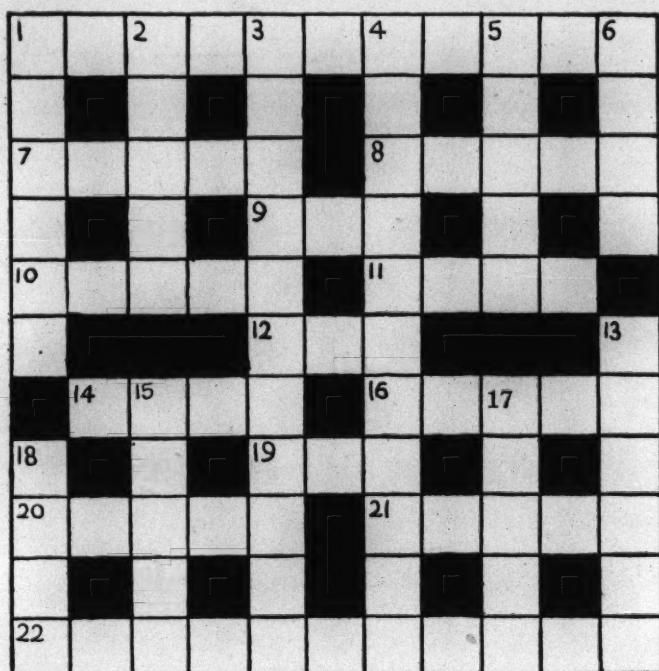
PRICE NINEPENCE



FILM CROSSWORD No. 14

SOLUTION NEXT MONTH

Solution to Crossword No. 13 at foot of column



ACROSS

1. Lady Olivier (6, 5).
7. Character actor who is in "The Brass Monkey" (5).
8. Part of British Empire and background for big outdoor epics (5).
9. "— Over Town." A new British film (3).
10. This starts entertainment (5).
11. A Russian film. "— The Terrible" (4).
12. "Each Dawn I —" (3).
14. Ginger is William's in the "William" films (4).
16. First name of author of "Dear Octopus," the Margaret Lockwood film (5).
19. Evergreen tree (3).
20. Derek Bond in the "Scott" film (5).
21. Novello is to screen his dancing ones (5).
22. She's one of the

screen's favourite mothers (6, 5).

DOWN

1. Laughton's contained Wrath (6).
2. Eric Blore makes an impeccable English one (5).
3. Tracy's English film (6, 2, 3).
4. Famous character actor seen in "The Calendar" (6, 5).
5. "Black Narcissus" was set in this country (5).
6. Britain's cartoon maker (4).
13. First name of Miss O'Shea of "London Town" (6).
15. "— Reserve." A James Mason film (5).
17. Paulette Goddard as a chambermaid kept this book (5).
18. J. Arthur Rank might be termed a film this (4).

CLUES ACROSS.—1, Godden. 4, Itma. 8, Sands. 9, Maori. 10, Ada. 12, Sid. 13, Ulster. 15, Gus. 16, Bel. 17, Ivy. 18, Report. 19, Lee. 20, O.S.S. 23, Veidt. 24, Auric. 25, Stew, 26, Museum.

CLUES DOWN.—1, Gish. 2, Dennis Price. 3, Elsa. 5, Trottie True. 6, Aviary. 7, Small. 11, Duets. 12, Sue. 15, Graves. 16, Broth. 21, Sabu. 22, Scum.

EUROPEAN FILM REVIEW

THIS publication, printed in Switzerland, is something entirely new in the field of film journalism; with over 80 pages and nearly as many illustrations, it can only be sent to you on a subscription basis. The first issue will be ready on Monday, 21st February, and copies will be sent to all who mail or have mailed 2s. 7d., which includes cost of postage.



TELEVISION WEEKLY

ON 18th February, Precinct Publications launch "Television Weekly." This magazine is the first in this new and interesting field giving news, views, and articles, not only from Alexandra Palace, but from other countries where television marches ahead. Copies will be on sale at most bookstalls, price 4d., or can be mailed to any address on receipt of 5d. to include postage.

PRECINCT PUBLICATIONS

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Film Monthly Review

FEBRUARY, 1949

Vol. 7, No. 2

EDITORIAL

OUR regular readers, both in Britain and overseas, will be pleased to learn that we have just been awarded a certificate by the Indian Film Journalists' Association. They consider that "Film Monthly Review" is Britain's best, most impartial, and most widely circulated film journal in both the West and the East. The certificate is signed by ten leading Indian writers, editors, poets and musicians, representing the cinema, the radio, the Press, and the world of literature.

In the same post we received copies of a very interesting monthly, "Cinemag—The Filmagazine With A Conscience," published in Madras. The quality of this periodical—as you will see from the article, "The Cinema," reprinted in this issue—is very high indeed. We in this office, subjected as we are to a continual bombardment of sycophantic publicity hand-outs, need hardly say how much we appreciated its refreshing sincerity and idealism.

Best Picture from Any Source

We are pleased to announce that "Film Monthly Review" now has the full co-operation of both the British Film Institute and the British Film Academy. A full account of the activities of these two highly important organisations will appear in our March issue. For the present, readers may be interested in the following list of films chosen by the British Film Academy judges—chairman, John Grierson. Academy members will vote on this list for the best picture, from any source, shown in the United Kingdom during 1948:

Crossfire, American; *The Fallen Idol*, British; *Four Steps in the Clouds*, Italian; *Hamlet*, British; *Monsieur Vincent*, French; *The Naked City*, American; *Paisa*, Italian.

As you will see, two of the seven are British. Before we can expect a higher proportion in future years we will really have to do something about the shocking state of British film production; as we go to press we learn that more than half of our studios are closed, and a record number of studio workers are unemployed. And yet British films were recently granted a quota of 45 per cent. of our screen time!

March Edition

Our March edition will contain articles by such authorities as John Grierson, Frank Launder, Mai Harris of the famous Academy Cinema, Oliver Bell, and Philip Mackie of the Films Division, Central Office of Information. In addition, there will be a pictorial feature on *The Blue Lagoon*, and an account of a personal interview with

Jean Simmons; we would add that Miss Simmons has also received a certificate from India—for her exceptional acting ability. Incidentally, Jean is a most enthusiastic reader of "Film Monthly Review."

Future Editions

In the very near future we shall be publishing articles on screen acting, screenwriting, continuity, and story editing—all written by people with practical experience in those fields.

Also, several of our journalists are now touring Europe engaged on an intensive study of the contemporary Continental film; very soon we shall be giving you their reports.

In short, "Film Monthly Review" is living up to its reputation as "Britain's best-informed film magazine."

ROBERT HIRST.

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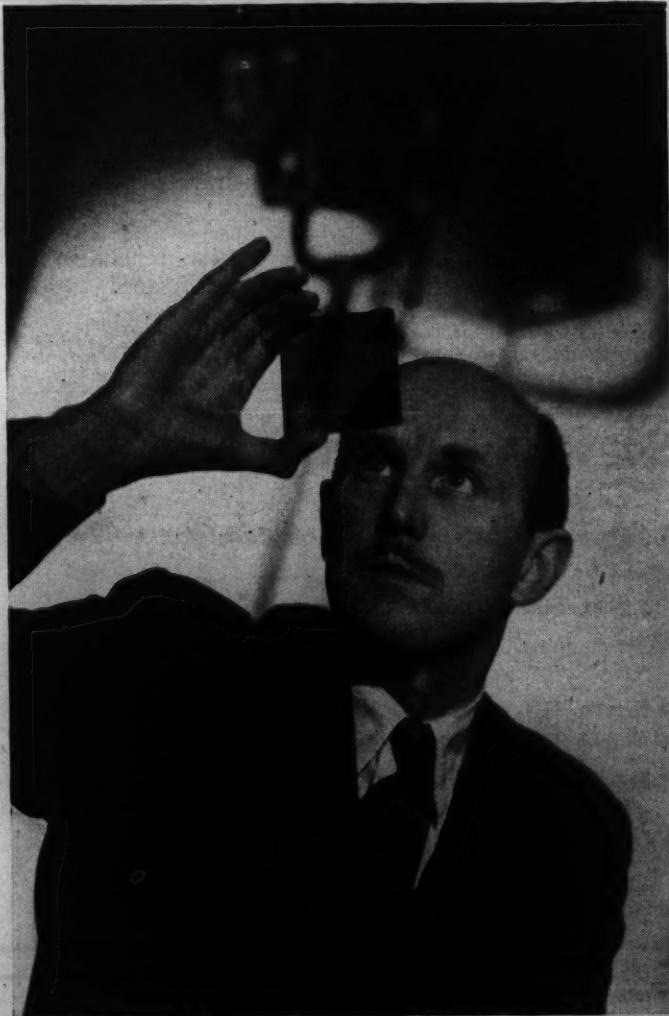
This month's cover picture: KATHLEEN BYRON
(Edited by Robert Hirst)

MICHAEL POWELL and EMERIC

A highly original writer-producer-director team, and they have given us films like 49th Parallel, Colonel Blimp, A Matter of Life and Death, The Red Shoes and now—The Small Back Room.

MICHAEL POWELL

MICHAEL POWELL, 43, was born in Canterbury and was there educated at King's School. On leaving school he obtained a



Michael Powell first won fame with his beautiful film, "The Edge of the World," made in the Island of Foula, in the Shetlands.

position in a bank. But this was much too monotonous for young Michael; and so he resigned and set off to join his father who was then living in the south of France.

There, Michael resolved to make his career in the film industry. After many bitter disappointments he eventually secured a job in Nice, with Rex Ingram. During the next five years Powell had ample opportunity for gaining practical experience; he was, in turn, a still photographer, cameraman, cutter, continuity man, actor, screenwriter, and assistant director. And then, at long last, in 1930 he directed his very first film, *Two Crowded Hours*. This marked him out as one of Britain's most promising film directors.

In 1936 he made a picture of sombre beauty, *The Edge of the World*—perhaps his finest film. *The Edge of the World* was voted one of the ten best shown in America during 1938. To-day it is acclaimed as a classic of the cinema; it is shown by film societies and repertory cinemas throughout the world. For years Powell had planned to make this film; when finally allowed to do so, he disregarded his studios numerous orders to return when he was only half-way through the shooting of it. With his unit he remained on the remote Island of Foula, in the Shetlands, until the very last shot had been taken to his complete satisfaction. His book, "2,000 Feet on Foula," tells the interesting story of their experiences.

The Edge of the World established Michael Powell as a fine and sensitive craftsman; it also proved him to be one of our most courageous and original film directors.

Later, Powell worked with Korda on *The Thief of Baghdad* and *The Lion Has Wings*. In 1940, together with Emeric Pressburger, he made *Contraband*. This was the beginning of a very successful writer-director-producer partnership which has given us *The Spy in Black*; *49th Parallel*—this film introduced a personality

PRESSBURGER

by Isabel Cameron

hitherto quite unknown to cinema audiences : that excellent actor, Eric Portman; *One of Our Aircraft is Missing*; and *The Silver Fleet*.

In 1943 Powell and Pressburger formed their own company, The Archers Film Productions. Since then they have made the following films :—

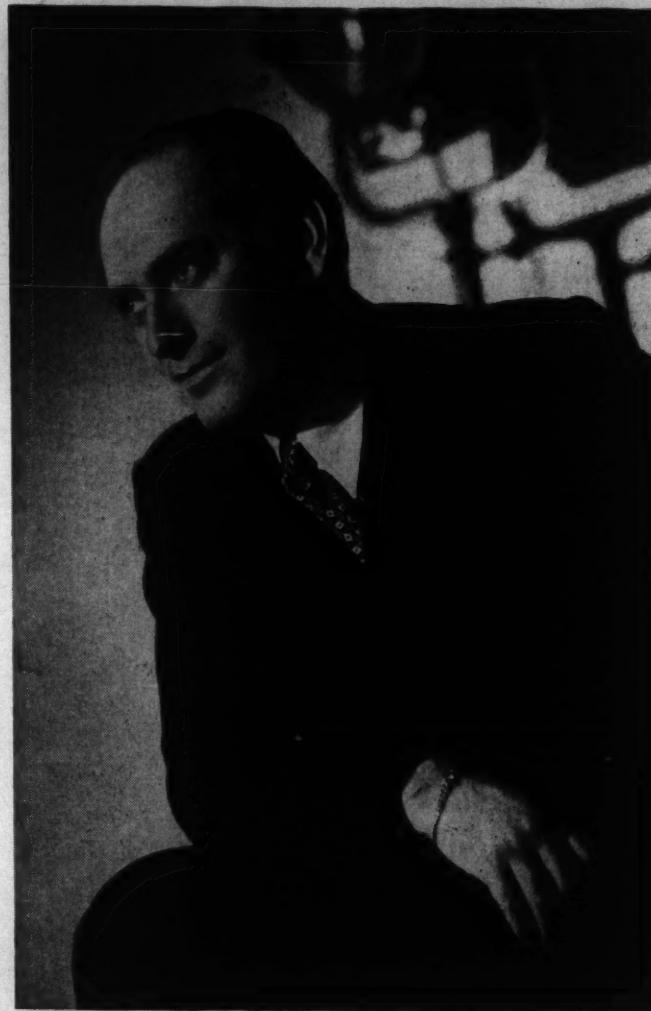
The Life and Death of Colonel Blimp; *The Volunteer*; *A Canterbury Tale*; *I Know Where I'm Going*; *A Matter of Life and Death*—a Royal Command film; *Black Narcissus*; *The End of the River*—directed by Derek Twist; *The Red Shoes*; and now, *The Small Back Room*.

At present they are filming *The Elusive Pimpernel*, with David Niven, Margaret Leighton and Jack Hawkins.

Michael Powell's hobbies are film-going, reading, theatre-going, travelling, and meeting people ; these, of course are all strongly related to his chief hobby—making films !

EMERIC PRESSBURGER

Emeric Pressburger, 46, was born in Hungary and educated at both Prague and Stuttgart Universities. He began his career as a journalist, eventually graduating as a screenwriter in Germany, with U.F.A. In 1933, when Hitler came to power, Pressburger went to France. He reached England in 1935. On arrival Emeric knew nothing whatever of our language, country or people. Yet within five years he was recognised as one of the finest screenwriters in the British film industry. Perhaps this was due to the fact that as a stranger he had a keener and more objective observation of our mode of life than the average British writer. But nevertheless, it is indeed a remarkable achievement to be able to write film stories in a foreign language ; Pressburger writes all his stories in English—every word of them. And although he has not yet completely mastered our tongue, his films do mirror British life—sometimes in a very stimu-



Emeric Pressburger, once a screenwriter with the famous German U.F.A. company, was soon acclaimed as one of the best screen-writers working in the British film industry.

lating and sympathetic manner. His scripts are often outstanding for their originality of thought and subtlety of dialogue ; Pressburger was awarded an Oscar for his screenplay of the *49th Parallel*.

Emeric Pressburger and Michael Powell first met while they were both working for Korda. Since then they have shared the cheers, and sometimes the jeers, for many thought-provoking pictures.

Emeric is a quiet and unassuming man ; it is most difficult to force him into an argument. This is only possible when the issue is one of real importance ; then he will readily debate both logically and thoroughly.

This soft-voiced, retiring artist is a man of culture and scholarship. But if you should ever be fortunate enough to meet Emeric Pressburger be prepared for his keen sense of humour and his very wicked wit.

NEW MASTERS FOR OLD

by J. W. Booth

This is the second article in which J. W. Booth chooses two more outstanding directors who have given proof that they are following in the footsteps of the Old Masters.

EDWARD DMYTRYK

TIME passes quickly in these troubled modern times and with it go fluctuating fortunes and changing circumstances. Indeed it seems only yesterday that Edward Dmytryk visited these shores—loudly hailed as one of Hollywood's new "ace" directors—in order to direct the first joint RKO-Radio-J. Arthur Rank production, *So Well Remembered*.

Outcast from Hollywood

How well did Dmytryk remember, as—some two years later—he quietly returned . . . an outcast from Hollywood, dismissed from the employ of RKO-Radio and black-listed throughout the American studios! And for what?

Well, Dmytryk had been caught up in that vast witch hunt, the un-American Activities probe. Hollywood, condemned both from within her own gates and by the outside world for the mediocrity and insignificance of her post-war films, was beginning to rediscover her social conscience; Dmytryk himself directed *Crossfire*, the forerunner of the anti-Semitism cycle.

But Dmytryk fell foul of the un-American Activities Committee and, with him, his film found disfavour too. The scourge of intolerance was turned upon the man who had dared to crusade against it!

Messenger Boy

Dmytryk was born in Canada, of Ukrainian parents, but when he was seven the family moved south to Los Angeles. There, Edward later attended Hollywood High School. During the summer holidays he

worked as a messenger boy in the Paramount studios.

He must have been impressed by the possibilities of a motion-picture career, because he left college during his second year and obtained a job in the cutting rooms. Three years later he was an assistant cutter and then a fully-fledged film editor, being responsible for such films as *Ruggles of Red Gap* and *Love Affair*.

Director

In 1939 Paramount promoted him to directorial status and he was assigned to a number of "B" features, including *Television Spy* and *Mystery Sea Raider*. Action and suspense were the outstanding qualities of all of these.

He then moved to the Columbia studios, where amongst other assignments he piloted both the *Lone Wolf* and *Boston Blackie* through their familiar exploits.

In 1942 yet another move took place. This time it was to RKO-Radio, for whom he directed his first two films to claim attention—*Hitler's Children* and *Behind the Rising Sun*. Both these productions, however, had the taint of war-time propaganda and sensationalism. It was not until *Farewell My Lovely* that Dmytryk moved into the top ranks of the American directors.

Essence of Cinematic Technique

With it he gave to film-goers a new Dick Powell, a totally different personality from the very mannered crooner of the 'thirties. But, as for Dmytryk himself, *Farewell My Lovely* rather marked a new step in the development of the former film

editor and director of "B" features. The same qualities were still there, although heightened by the new scope for their employment. The fast action and quick cutting demonstrated the true film editor's conception of movement as the essence of cinematic technique.

In a period of many first-rate thrillers, such as *Double Indemnity* and *Laura*, the Dmytryk film could well have been just another of the inevitable cycle following in the wake of success. It became something more because Dmytryk, with his producer, Adrian Scott and their script-writer, John Paxton, made it the first serious attempt at bringing the work of novelist Raymond Chandler to the screen. The producer-director-writer combination firmly established itself with the series of films that followed.

It was, perhaps, too much to expect that *Cornered* would retain, or recapture the brilliance of its predecessor. Despite the liveliness of Dmytryk's direction the film found itself bogged in a treacherous sea of plot. Over-complication was the root of the evil, as it too often is in films of this genre.

With *So Well Remembered* Dmytryk was faced with the unenviable task which confronts all directors working on a native theme in other than their native lands. Yet, with a mixed Anglo-American cast, he achieved, with the help of his collaborators, a film not only atmospherically true to our provincial life, but also one in which the spirit of James Hilton's book was preserved.

Social Significance

The three crusading musketeers then made the eventful *Crossfire*. As a film it was excellent, for its cutting, its lighting and its camera-work. To this basic technical adroitness, first evident in *Farewell My Lovely*, was now added social significance. Cloaked in the outer wrappings of a murder mystery, racial intolerance was the injustice against which it preached.

Unfortunately the political opinions of private life became entangled with the creative film work of its makers. They had given a lead to Hollywood, but, like pioneers in so many fields, they paid the penalty for their pains.

So it was that Dmytryk found himself back in England, in the strange position of being an exile from Hollywood, itself the war-time refuge of Continental directors fleeing from the intolerant Nazis. Fortunately, he was soon back at work, directing *Obsession*. Hollywood's loss will be our gain.

JULES DASSIN

Yet another film to be involved in the probe conducted by the un-American Activities Committee, through its writer, Albert Maltz, was *The Naked City*—the most important film to date of its director, Jules Dassin.

Like the Dymtryks, the Dassin family also moved during Jules' early boyhood. But their destination was New York and so, as Jules grew up, his ambition was directed towards the theatre.

For two years following his graduation in 1934 he wandered all through Europe, haunting theatres and studying dramatic techniques. Upon his return to New York he joined the Yiddish Theatre, then later he worked in the small playhouse of the Artef Group. The group worker received no salary, so Jules earned money by touring the summer resorts in the Catskill mountains and putting on shows with the help of local talent.

Writer, Producer then Director

No doubt this was excellent experience in the handling of people and Dassin was soon commanding a good salary, working on the radio as a writer and producer. This led to his direction of an unsuccessful New York stage production and this, in its turn, to a motion-picture contract with RKO-Radio. Strangely enough he never directed a film for them, but, for six valuable months, he was able to study the individual technique of such directors as Alfred Hitchcock and Garson Kanin.

The influence of Hitchcock was evident from Dassin's first feature film, *Nazi Agent*, starring the late Conrad Veidt. Here was the same building-up of suspense through careful choice of detail at which Hitchcock is a past master.

A series of typical "programme" features for M-G-M followed—*Mademoiselle France*, *The Canterville Ghost*, *Two Smart People*.

The Dassin career was in a rut when he joined Universal-International to make the two films upon which his present position is based—*Brute Force* and *The Naked City*.

Influence of Mark Hellinger

It could be said that Dassin was very fortunate in being brought into close working contact with that dynamic producer, the late Mark Hellinger. For, whilst impressing upon all his films the stamp of his own individual personality, Hellinger also evoked from his directors the finest work of which they are capable. Raoul Walsh's direction has never been seen to better advantage than in *The Roaring Twenties* or *High Sierra*, nor that of Robert Siodmak in *The Killers*.

All Hellinger's films preach the recurrent theme that "Crime does not pay," not for moral reasons, but simply because no matter how strong or ruthless the criminal, the forces of law and order must always be stronger and yet more ruthless.

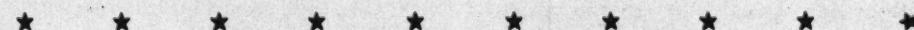
Vivid Realism

This pervading feeling of inevitability was finely stressed by Dassin's direction of *Brute Force*. Except for the unfortunate and misguided flashbacks, he moved the story along in a powerful, relentless manner, using a taut, curiously clipped narrative technique.

The Naked City was more leisurely in its exposition, which no doubt was as it was meant to be. For here was New York sweltering in a summer heatwave. These were real city streets, real crowds on the sidewalks. The city itself was the star of the film; the characters and incidents were the background material.

The bursts of violent action undoubtedly belong to Hellinger, forming his swan song; but how much did the quieter moments owe to the sensitivity of Dassin?

Dassin wants to make good films, and a good film to him means one with not only entertainment value but artistic significance too. In the light of present evidence he should make many of them—always provided that Hollywood will let him!



Letter of the Month

Dear Sir,

I have been following "Film Monthly Review" for some considerable time and thought that you might like a reader's view on your magazine.

I admit that "Film Monthly Review" does a good job in its efforts to cater for the reader whose taste in films does not stop at the "Stars" but goes beyond to the people who deserve equal credit—the film director, screenwriter, cameraman, etc. This, however, is not enough — what "Film Monthly Review" lacks is a lighter side.

By introducing into their feature, *Picture Parade*, the most progressive people engaged in the various parts of the film industry, the B.B.C. tackles very seriously the task of getting the public interested in the making of better British films. This

serious note, however, does not deter them from using *Drearytone*, the often highly amusing skit that attempts to expose the bad side of the industry.

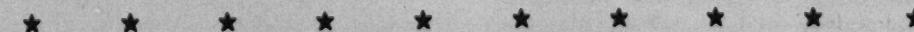
I think it would be a good idea if "F.M.R." followed the B.B.C.'s example and had a series of amusing sketches on the film industry. In a subject such as this there is plenty of scope for anybody with a working knowledge of the industry plus a sense of humour, and I feel sure that most of your regular contributors do possess those qualities.

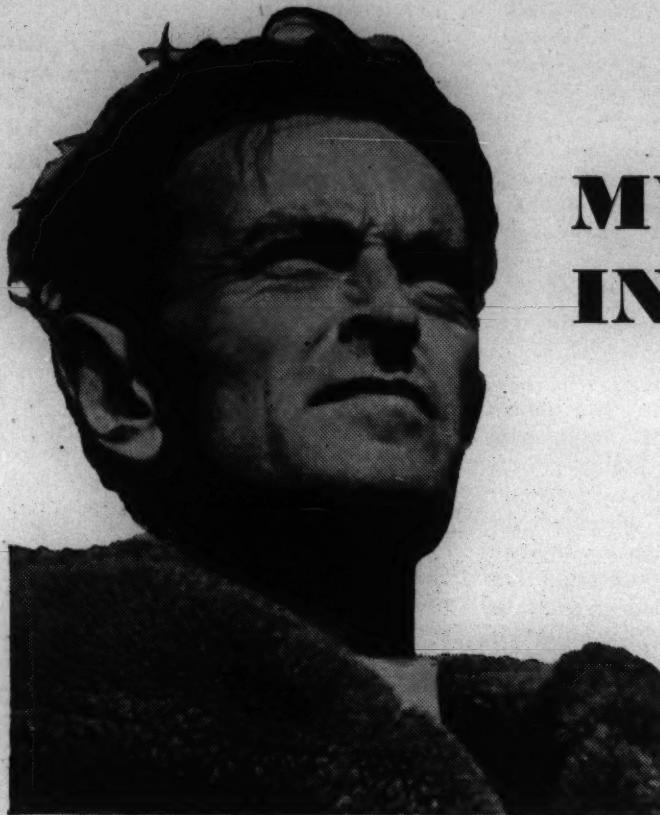
Yours sincerely,

PETER JAY.

3, Alexandra Mansions,
Chichele Road, London, N.W.2.

The Editor welcomes other readers' opinions on this question of humour.





*One of the finest Film Directors
takes you into his confidence.*

MY EXPERIMENTS IN FILM MAKING

by

David Lean

THE moving picture is only 53 years old and it is still in the process of evolving its technique. When D. W. Griffith thought of shooting close-ups he was told that audiences would not accept photographs of artistes' faces without their bodies. They did.

Later, audiences were introduced to the fade-in and fade-out and their use became generally accepted symbols of a time lapse. If present-day audiences were not acquainted with the fade-in and fade-out, they would almost certainly, on seeing it for the first time, think that some-

thing had gone wrong with the projector.

Similarly, the flashback has now become acceptable to audiences. You show a close-up of a man thinking, and by means of a dissolve and the use of the man's voice saying "I saw her first ten years ago"

Reviewing the Films

ELIZABETH OF LADYMEAD
PRODUCED and directed by Herbert Wilcox, this is a story that crosses a century of wars, and tells of the soldier, who, after varying years of service, returns to find a wife who is not quite the same as when he left her. Anna Neagle, from crinolines to new look and back again, spans the century as "the girl he left behind him"; she is always beautiful to look at and acts for the most part with ability. But she alone cannot prevent the film from being an unmistakable bore for most of its running time. The theme of the returning soldier, the mental re-adjustment to normality, and all the

ramifications of rehabilitation lend inexhaustible scope for portrayal. It was admirably treated in *The Best Years of Our Lives*, and on a different level in *Perfect Strangers*. In this film, however, there is little attempt to portray any conflict between the people concerned. The welfare of the ex-soldier presents such a serious problem that, it is unforgivable that such a theme should be treated on a level of frivolity. When Anna Neagle asks towards the end of the film, "Have we solved our problem, darling?" it was the first indication I had that she and her husband had a problem. However, whatever it was they did

have was portrayed in a series of four episodes showing the reactions of four returning soldiers to the varying changes of their wives. But despite the four very different periods, there was little variety, so that the film dwindled into boring repetition—repetition of situation, repetition of dialogue with occasional etymological emendations. I felt myself being grateful that the producer had chosen to set the film in a period of four wars if only for the reason that we were spared yet another episode.

MARRIAGE IN THE SHADOW

BASED on the life of actor Joachim Gottschalk and his wife Meta Wolff, a Jewish actress, this film succeeds in its description of

you show pictures on the screen which the audience accept as happenings in the past.

Showing People's Thoughts

What is the next move? I think it is the showing of people's thoughts in pictures, for so far the cinema has been greatly handicapped by its inability to cope with this, and I think that it is only a matter of time before audiences will accept this as a new technical convention—but they will have to be eased into it very slowly.

For example, a girl is saying goodbye to a man. The man steps into a speedboat which roars off across a lake. They wave to each other. Watching them from above is the girl's husband. He has appeared unexpectedly. He knows that his wife and the other man were at one time lovers. Jealousy surges up in him—he turns towards the camera—a big close-up flashes on the screen—a close-up of the wife and the man in the speedboat in a passionate kiss—the husband turns away and tries to blot out the thought.

Confused Audiences?

Will an audience understand this? Will they understand that the close-up of the lovers embracing is the jealous imagination of the husband or will they think that a piece of film has got in at the wrong place? I hope they understand it, for this is

a scene in my new film, *The Passionate Friends*, and is an extension of my first experiment which was made in *Oliver Twist*.

In this film I only tried it once, in the scene where Bill Sikes sits in his room with the body of Nancy, the woman he has just murdered. After showing his conscience and build-up of dreadful remorse, I cut from a big close-up of his face to a shot of him striking down Fagin, the man who had incited him to the murder. In other words, I hoped that audiences would understand that he was wishing he had killed Fagin and not Nancy.

In *The Passionate Friends* I have used this device several times and am very anxious to see the results with an audience.

New Flashback Technique

In *Oliver Twist* I made another experiment which I intend to expand in technique for my next picture, *Madelaine Smith*. An extension of the flashback principle, it was featured in the scene showing the clandestine meeting between the workhouse matron, Mrs. Corney, and a man named Monks. The matron is describing what took place ten years before when she attended a dying pauper woman. The accepted method of tackling such a scene would be to dissolve back into the past with the matron's voice con-

tinuing over the picture, but instead of dissolving back I made a straight cut back, so that the audience are introduced to the entire scene and dialogue which took place in the past.

The scene shows the dying pauper gathering all her fast-dying strength in order to tell the matron a vital piece of information concerning Oliver's birth, but she falls back dead before she can get it out. I then cut straight to the scene in the present and the man Monks says to the matron "It's a lie. She said more!" The matron answers, "She didn't utter another word—but it was then that it happened." "What?" asks Monks. Another straight cut into the past. The pauper is seen lying dead in bed, the matron rises and starts to unclasp the dead woman's hand from her own. A piece of paper flutters down on to the bed. Another straight cut into the present and Monks says "A piece of paper. What was it?" The matron tells him.

Towards Full Maturity

The recent success of *Oliver Twist* is not only very gratifying, but it also shows that these experiments have worked and have proved that one can flash backwards and forwards at will between the past and the present. If one can also cut from the present to people's thoughts, maybe the cinema will have advanced a little further towards maturity.

misery caused to the Jewish people of Germany during 1933 to 1943. The entire Jewish people are seen in the characterisation of Ilse Steppat as Meta Wolff. The harrowing bitterness, frustration and pain which has only one ending—the liquidation camp or suicide. In the film the tragedy ends in a suicide scene which is very poignant.

This film has a deep moral which the critics have either seen and not bothered about or haven't seen at all. It is that the professional worker cannot stand aloof from events in his country. Sooner or later he is swamped—then he may be sorry.

Really beautiful and sincere acting comes from Paul Klinger portraying Gottschalk and Willi Prager as the old moralising Uncle Louis.

Memory is short. This film is not too long. See it. L.C.

Book Guide

"THE NEGRO IN FILMS" By Peter Noble

Skelton Robinson, 15s.

For many years Peter Noble—one of our leading writers on the film and the theatre—has persisted in writing and lecturing extensively on the subject of racial intolerance. In his latest book—his most serious work, in my opinion—Mr. Noble analyses, with passionate sincerity, the cinematic distortion of the negro as an inferior being. He also examines the careers of many famous negro artists—Paul Robeson, Robert Adams, Lena Horne, Eddie-Rochester Anderson, Rex Ingram, Orlando Martins, Elizabeth Welch and others. And he completely defeats Griffith's defence of "The Birth of a Nation," irrefutably proving that this film is a dangerous vehicle of anti-negro bias. There are also 43 excellent illustrations.

"The Negro in Films" is, in its particular field, a work of mature scholarship. And its clear-cut, objective style makes for very easy and interesting reading. This is an important book. It should be read by every intelligent film-goer. No liberal-minded person can afford to ignore it.

R.H.

THE SMALL BACK ROOM

Written, produced and directed by Michael Powell and Emeric Pressburger from Nigel Balchin's Novel—A Production of The Archers.

SAMMY RICE DAVID FARRAR
PROF. MAIR MILTON ROSMER
TILL MICHAEL GOODLiffe
SUSAN KATHLEEN BYRON
WARING JACK HAWKINS
COL. HOLLAND

JOE EMRYS JONES
CORPORAL TAYLOR
CYRIL CUSACK
CAPT. STUART
MICHAEL GOUGH
LESLIE BANKS



Susan takes Captain Stuart to meet "backroom-boy" scientist Sammy Rice in "The Lord Nelson." Stuart wants help in solving a new-type German booby bomb.

THE STORY

Captain Stuart, R.E., arrives at Professor Mair's Research Section in London. He is seeking his help to solve the problem of a new type German booby bomb which is causing many fatal accidents. Mair details scientist Sammy Rice to work on it. Susan, secretary to Mair's personnel chief, Waring, takes Stuart back to their flat to meet Sammy.

Sammy has a false foot. It hurts him most of the time. As an opiate, he would like to drink whisky. To please Susan, he drinks beer, or just doesn't drink. His lameness makes him feel inferior. Inferior as a lover; inferior as a man unable to wear uniform; inferior in his work, for though a brilliant scientist, he allows himself to be exploited by Waring, whose sole concern is his own self-aggrandisement in the whirl of Ministerial power politics.

This is made evident in the affair of the Reeves anti-tank gun. Though reported on adversely by Sammy, Waring persuades Mair to "sell" the Minister on its development. At a meeting called by military heads and rival scientific bodies, Sammy insists on giving his true opinion, to Waring's fury.

Meanwhile Sammy co-operates with Stuart to find a solution to the booby bomb mechanism. They are unsuccessful, and Waring suggests that Sammy should drop work on it as it is not likely to bring any credit to their Section.

The Minister resigns. Professor Mair decides to return to his University appointment. Although Sammy is sounded as to the possibility of his taking over the Section, he lacks sufficient confidence to make the decisive step. A pompous scientist, Brine—rival to Professor Mair—is given the appointment, with Waring as deputy. Susan, furious with Sammy's inability to get tough with anyone but herself, quarrels with him and leaves him.

Sammy drowns his sorrows in whisky. He is shaken out of his drinking bout by the news that Stuart has been killed, while attempting to dismantle one of the booby bombs. Another one has been found on Chesil Bank, Dorset, and Sammy goes down to see what he can do. With the help of notes dictated by Stuart over field telephone while dismantling the first bomb, Sammy manages to solve the mystery of its mechanism. He takes his life in his hands on a fifty-fifty chance. In so doing, he finds his own salvation as a man and recreates a new relationship for himself and Susan.



While waiting in his flat for Susan's return, Sammy is tempted to open the whisky bottle. In his imagination, the bottle swells to gigantic proportions, and Sammy falls exhausted against the wall.



While Sammy is intently watching the trials of the Reeves anti-tank gun, he receives a message that the mysterious German booby bomb has caused a fatal accident.



"Did you pick it up?" Stuart and Sammy anxiously interrogate a dying gunner who has been blown up by one of the booby bombs. Before he dies he says 'yes.'



Sammy slowly stretches out his reaching rod towards the bomb embedded in the shingle. Stuart was killed while engaged in a similar attempt. But Sammy succeeds.



Pinker, a civil servant intriguer, hints that changes are to take place in Sammy's section, and that Sammy ought to do some intriguing himself to better his position.



Sammy, a cripple, heavily drinks whisky to alleviate the pain in his foot, much against the wishes of Susan. He tries very hard to give up drinking, and takes pills.



Sammy just stares across the sitting-room at Susan. Her portrait is back on the table, all her things are back. All is as before. It is as though she had never left him.



A “NEW GIRL” IN FILMS

by
Dame Edith Evans

*“The greatest stage actress of our time.” embarks on a film career. First as the malevolent 92-year-old Duchess Ranevskaya in *The Queen of Spades*, then, by contrast, in *The Last Days of Dolwyn*, a simple peasant woman.*

I HAVE now completed my second film, *The Last Days of Dolwyn*. Although I have returned to very happy theatre work again with the Old Vic Theatre Company, I felt a little sad on leaving the studios.

I was very happy indeed in my new surroundings. I found a friendliness and comradeship which reminded me very much of the days when I first went on the stage.

Film Technique Strange

As you know, I am very much the “new girl” in films and much of the film technique was very strange to me. I never experienced anything,

however, but the greatest consideration and help to smooth my path.

I am frequently asked by my friends: “Did you not find it all very different?” My reply was, that when one comes to the actual acting I did not find it very different. One has to be sincere and mean what one is saying on the screen just as one does in the theatre. I sometimes found it a little puzzling and difficult on those occasions when I was supposed to express the greatest consternation or tragic grief and keep my right foot pressed against a little piece of white wood and not turn my head three inches to the left, otherwise I would have spoilt my lighting cameraman, Otto Heller’s, lighting scheme. Or when I moved away to hug the paling I should be out of sight altogether.

No Time for Inspiration!

Also, I found I had another nasty little habit. In the middle of a tracking shot I would have an “inspired thought,” which caused me to stand still. And, not having let my camera operator, Gus Drisse, into my secret, I found the camera had left me behind. But I promised faithfully to do better next time.

Amazing Art Department

The part of film-making which really did stagger me was the province of the Art Department—out of doors and indoors this intrigued and thrilled me all the time.

I found myself sitting in my studio Welsh cottage and wishing I lived there, or resting on the grass and wondering—why go away for a holiday, when one can sit here admiring the beauty and detail of a Victorian drawing room, or strolling in the conservatory and recalling the dances of my girlhood.

In short, I never ceased to enjoy this craftsmanship. Again, it reminded me when I first went on the stage. I remember a property master on my first engagement who used to make lovely vases and furniture, and when I am acting I get a greater thrill from handling a good prop. than I should from the real thing.

The Future

I hope very much that I shall be able to fit into the scheme of films, because I am ambitious to do good work, and I should like to do theatre and screen work as long as I am able to act.

Fan Dance!

Murder at the Windmill, the Daniel Angel musical-thriller now in production at Nettlefold Studios, will incorporate many of the original Windmill Theatre favourites, including the famous Fan Dance. We hear from the States that thousands of nostalgic ex-G.I.’s are eagerly awaiting the arrival of the finished film!

A Creative and Cultural Instrument

THE CINEMA

by Madhukar Deshpande, B.Com., LL.B., Wardha

FROM its very inception the cinema has been regarded as an instrument of recreation. Considering the huge crowds at the theatres and the strata of society it comprises, the influence of the film on the public mind must be considerable. How far this influence has been used for the benefit of the people is a question that demands our closest attention to-day.

Profit Motive

The mass appeal of cinema is by no means peculiar to India. The monotony of life which is the peculiar accompaniment of the so-called modern age has enhanced the value of cinema as a means of recreation. This in itself is not a danger in as much as recreation is a very essential part of life. But the definitions of words these days have undergone enormous changes and hence even the most filthy and vulgar witticism is being passed on to us as recreation. The human nature, as it is, has always an easy appeal for low sentiments. Another off-shoot of the machine age—the modern businessman who has attained notoriety for making money at the cost of human values—has taken full advantage of this mass weakness. Consequently the potentialities of this art as an instrument of creation and culture will always remain unrealised while in his hands. The producer-director (owner and what not!) is guided by the principle of "box-office hit." It is indeed sad to notice that the film has become an industry and like most of the other industries, it is controlled by men whose interest is essentially a financial one.

Themes Needed

Mass appeal, cheapness and large-scale production have become the keynote of this industry. The ideal of public welfare is subordinated to

the practical consideration of good dividends. These box-office experts are perfectly attuned to the people's psychological mood at any particular moment and hence they have made use of every conceivable subject—may it be social, political or religious—to serve their turn. It is through this peculiar mentality that the subjects through which the film would have played its rightful role as a creative and cultural instrument, have been most inaptly handled. The keen competition amongst film companies to announce their "big hits" even when their preliminaries are not

assumption that the choice of the multitude must necessarily be good, then this must be so. But once they realise the immense possibilities of the film in creative and cultural fields, then the life of glamorous girls, lavish richness, idle frolics and cheap romance is sure to be replaced by the life of the everyday farmer or student. The cinema is above all a creative instrument and full justice in this direction can be done, if everyday materials and themes are selected as bases on which to build.

Viewed from this angle, the cinema has a very important part to play in the realm of education, literary campaigns, prohibition, national consciousness, rural uplift, economic development and thousands of such social problems of everyday importance. "Education through films" has become the watchword of the day. But like most of the political slogans of our time, it is not to be valued more than a mere example of "catch-phraseism." Except in the case of Russia, very little use of the film has been made in this direction.

The Role of the Film

ready, is a pointer to this tendency. Many a time the promised production does not come at all, and at others the film is rushed through; and under the name of "Grand Musical Extravaganza," or "Feast of Hilarious Comedy," or "Spectacular Historical Hit," people are offered worthless stuff. History is reduced to mockery and the thrilling romance, or "hilarious comedy," often degenerates into sheer vulgarity. Good stories are often distorted under the wrong notion that the screen must provide compensation for the deficiencies of real life. The world it depicts is entirely divorced from the realities of existence. As long as the film producers harp on the wrong

The descriptive power of the film is considerable. The two processes of observation and listening go on simultaneously. This naturally creates a very deep and lasting impression on the mind of the onlooker. The importance of many things is visually brought home to them. It is a matter of common knowledge to the student of geography that the mere description of the Congo Basin and the life of the people that inhabit it is not only dry, unrealistic but also tedious. But imagine the role of the film in this respect and we will at once be convinced that the film depicting the life of a negro and his geographical surroundings would certainly be interesting and instructive. "Visual

THE CINEMA *continued*

Training," as we may call this, can be made use of in every branch of education. It develops the power of imagination, observation, and it makes the student understand things in the right perspective. What is true of education is true of all other fields which the screen is called upon to serve. Instead of indulging in tedious village publicity through lectures or other dry programmes, how useful it would be to bring before them comparative and instructive pictures by the help of the screen. The importance of subjects like the life in a foreign village, co-operative farming, health and sanitation, modern agricultural implements, handicrafts and several other problems can be easily emphasised. The villagers will flock in large numbers to witness such programmes and the propaganda regarding rural uplift, which has made little headway in spite of huge expenditure, would, within a very short time, reach every nook and corner of the country with many fruitful results. The projector is portable and requires little technical knowledge to operate. Thus, if systematically planned, every village or school can have its own projector.

The Crux of the Problem

But the whole matter is not so easy as it would appear at first sight. The purchase and operation of projectors are secondary to the production of really good films. The crux of the problem, therefore, lies in the recognition of this fact. It imposes a moral duty on those in charge of the industry to canalise their resources for the betterment of our country. It must be understood that the full-length social, political or religious films have as much part to play in educating the masses and students as the short and documentary films specifically written for this particular purpose. The producer must therefore not only improve his full-length films in the light of the above observation but also he must devote some of his attention to short educative and documentary films.

Government's Duty

It throws an equally important moral obligation on the screenwriters. At present there are very few good story-writers and fewer producers

D. W. GRIFFITH

In two years this greatest of all film makers raised the level of the penny arcade to that of the contemporary theatre.

DAVID WARK GRIFFITH made the greatest of all individual contributions to the progress of the film. Materially his achievement can be measured in some two hundred short and two hundred long films, which cost twenty million dollars and grossed sixty million. Only two were sound films and they were negligible.

Ahead of His Time

His real achievement lies in the large proportion of these films which he personally created and in particu-

lar in two films, *The Birth of a Nation* and *Intolerance*, made between 1914 and 1916. In two years with two films Griffith raised the cinema from the level of the penny arcade and put it at least alongside the contemporary theatre. In two paces this sentimental giant advanced over ground which any of his competitors would have been proud to cover in twenty. Indeed for sheer largeness no subsequent film has surpassed *Intolerance*, which contains, in two hundred and twenty minutes of parallel action with a furiously increasing tempo, four examples of "Love's struggle throughout the Ages": the Nazarene, the Huguenot, the Babylonian and the Modern Industrial. Made at a cost of nearly two million dollars, when the average cost was three or four thousand, *Intolerance* was so

who can tactfully adapt stories to screen requirements. The screen is starved of original authorship and for its success in the new set-up, the screen must ultimately depend upon an outcrop of creative writing. Similarly, this creation must also be interpreted correctly and put upon the screen by men of first-rate ability. Thus the two factors are interdependent and consequently co-ordination and planning is necessary. The Government can do a lot in the matter. As regards the general films, the Government can exert its influence through censorship by refusing to pass the films which exploit human weakness for selfish ends. In the domain of educative and documentary films the Government is under a greater obligation. As the custodian of public education and welfare the Government must form a newsreel department and, through it, it should release such films weekly or fortnightly and make it compulsory on the part of the exhibitors to show them to the public. The different provincial departments, and other social and

cultural institutions, should be allowed to make use of these films on payment of nominal charges. Thus by the two-fold duties of supervisor and producer the Government can make full use of films as a creative and cultural instrument. It is to be remembered in this connection that it was reported about three years back that the Government of India were contemplating having 224 mobile cinema units for each civil district in the then British India. Such a scheme must be reconsidered and enforced at an early date.

It is to be hoped that at least in Independent India the producer, director, screenwriter, Government, and above all the "cine-fans," will rise to the occasion, ensuring that human values are not sacrificed at the altar of pecuniary gains. The film should not give to the people only what they want; it must see that they want the right things. It is in the manifestation of this principle that the creative and cultural value of the film lies.

—Cinemag, Madras.

by

Thorold Dickinson

far ahead of its time that it lost money among the very public who were paying and were yet to pay a gross of twenty millions to see *The Birth of a Nation*.

Torrent of Controversy

This latter film was Griffith's surest work. In it all the fruits of experiment, gained in a six years' apprenticeship in writing, producing and directing, are fused with the one subject closest to Griffith's passionately romantic nature, the lost Southern Confederate cause. For Griffith, born in Kentucky in 1875, son of a loud-voiced, patriotic Confederate colonel, the defeat of the Southern States was a tragic sacrifice on the altar of national unity, and he grasped to the full this opportunity to shake the complacency of the North. Even he did not

anticipate the torrent of controversy which his work was to unloose. But however one may regret his anti-negro bias, one can feel nothing but admiration for this first genuine work of art on the screen. It is rich with technical innovations and developments created solely by the demands of Griffith's abundant imagination, working merely from notes written and re-written and then discarded. There was no shooting script or even complete treatment for either of these films.

A Great Showman

Griffith's third masterpiece was *Broken Blossoms*. Being a great showman (the element which led to his decline as an artist), he personally supervised the presentation of his films not only in the big cities of America, but in London, where only Drury Lane would suit him. There he was feted by society and statesmen and persuaded to make two films of war propaganda, *Hearts of the World* and another. His affection for London grew and in Hollywood he made films with a London background, of which *Broken Blossoms* (from Thomas Burke's *The Chink and the Child*) was memorable for its romantic,

sordid atmosphere and for the performances of Donald Crisp as the bruiser, Richard Barthelmess, the Chink, and Lillian Gish: who can forget her mad terror as the Child?

Decline of an Artist

Till his retirement in 1931, this superbly vigorous twentieth-century innovator with the sentimental nineteenth-century outlook dwindled in stature, as picture by picture he lost his grip on his formerly vast audience. But none can take from him the pride of his place as the leading artist of the silent screen, the man who could see and hear through his eyes, who could shape three hours of intermingled variations on a great theme with Billy Bitzer's single camera, a pair of scissors and no script; who first craned his camera over the biggest sets of all time; used the close-up to stir us to tears; staged battle actions more clearly than anyone before or since, sometimes four miles from the lens; who introduced night photography, superimpositions, variations of dissolves, fades and camera masking; and did none of these things as a stunt.

Let us not forget.

—By kind permission of the B.F.A.

Foreign Films by a Correspondent

Remake of "Maria Chapdelaine"

Those of you who saw Julien Duvivier's production of *Maria Chapdelaine*, with Michele Morgan, will be interested to know that Michele is again to star in the same film which is to be made by the French Regina company together with Everest Films. The picture will be made partly in the Tyrol and in a London studio. Duvivier's film was shot in the French part of Canada in the French language. The remake is in English.

Question Mark!

FILM which is causing lots of interest in Italy at present is *Without Pity*, a Lux film directed by Alberto Lattuada. After its premiere recently, four leading American companies bid for its distribution in the States. Theme is about friendship between a negro U.S. soldier for a lonely Italian white girl. Johnny Kitzmiller, the coloured American star of *To Live in Peace*, again brings off a masterful role as a negro sergeant. There are no love scenes in the film but the director artistically portrays the feelings without action, if you get what I mean.

It is reckoned that this film will make even the most rabid racialist in the States sympathetic towards his coloured brother. Anyway, it is courageous of the American distribution companies to screen it, as the theme is one that could cause resentment if badly handled.

I understand there is a good chance of *Without Pity* being seen here.

The Return of Pabst

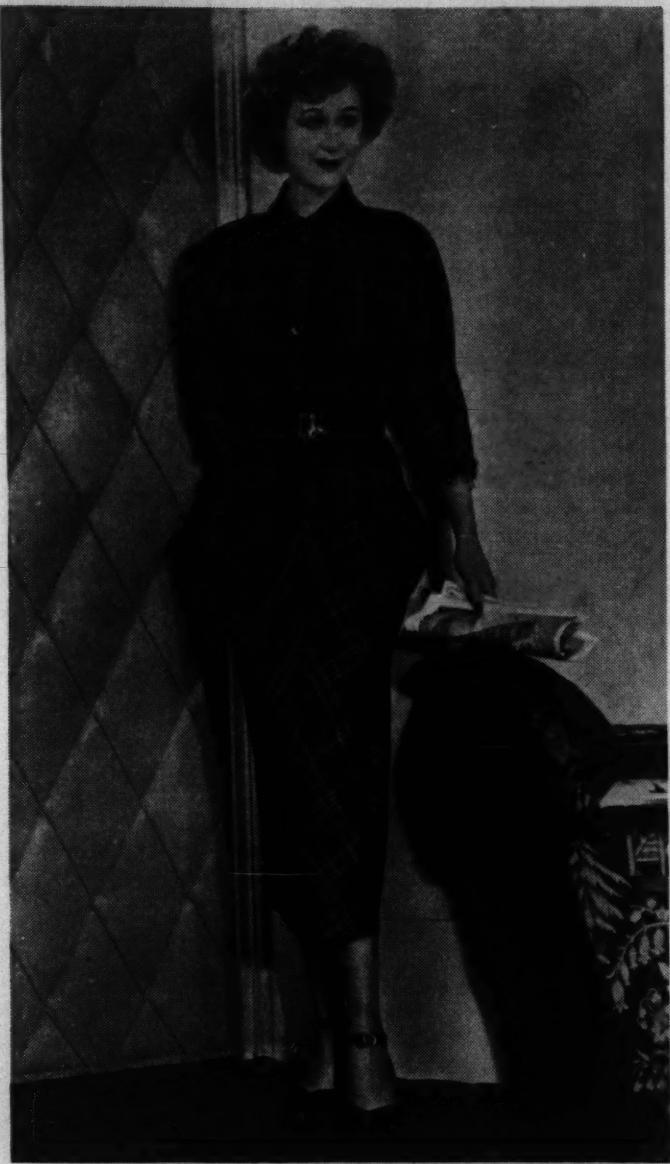
Remember Pabst? He made *The Joyless Street*, *Secrets of the Soul*, *Westfront* 1918 and a host of others which can still be seen in film-society shows. He has again made a picture which some say is an attempt to clear his position against Nazi-ism. *The Trial*, made in Austria some time back, is now Georg Wilhelm Pabst's first post-war production. It probes into the question of anti-Semitism and deals with the notorious ritual murder accusations levelled against the Hungarian Jews in the '80s. This picture, too, may come to British cinemas, so I am told.

Glimpses . . .

The German film *Marriage in the Shadow*, which in the January issue was said to be in dubbing stage has unfortunately "flopped" at the Curzon. Review is in this issue.

* * *

Foreign films for showing in London shortly include: *Germany, Year Zero*; *Angelina M.P.*; *American on Vacation*; and *Tragic Pursuit*.



THE THEME IS TARTAN

by Joy Peake

THE predominance of colourful plaids and tartans is a highlight of the dress collections seen in Paris and likely to be popular for some time to come. They are used for coats of the enveloping full-length swagger variety (excellent for the tall woman), for three-quarter length coats and pleated skirts worn with a plain jacket. Featured for rainwear, coats are hooded and tartan-lined.

One short swing-back coat (the new "winged" type) had long revers and deep cuffs of tartan.

A very attractive and practical revival is the stole and this is very effective in plaid with fringed ends. Capes, too, play an important part in the tartan scheme and there are many original notes in fashion accessories. It is introduced by way of hat trimming, turned-back cuffs on the newest gloves, for handbags and even buttons. The latest footwear is also designed in various plaids including ankle booties and spats.

The photograph on this page shows Margaret Leighton, star of *Bonnie Prince Charlie*, wearing a model dress designed by Ian Meredith. This style of intricate cut and elegant simplicity has a winged hip line. The material was created especially for Miss Leighton to wear in the film and the dress she wears as Flora Macdonald is the identical tartan.

Two other ideas from the stars come from Googie Withers, who wears a plaid three-quarter length belted coat in the Gainsborough production of *Once Upon A Dream* and Edwige Feuillere, who can be seen in the Two Cities comedy *Woman Hater*. She wears a classic tweed suit designed for her by Robert Piguet. It has a full-flaring skirt in a lovely combination of grey, black and smoke plaid, teamed with a dark grey jacket and a repetition of the plaid on the revers.

If we watch the stars, we can glean inspiration and ideas, and the tartan story is one which will add colour and chic to our jaded wardrobes.



Her Scottish interest revived by her role as Clementina Walkinshaw in the film, "Bonnie Prince Charlie," sophisticated Judy Campbell chooses this Stuart tartan beret, "Plume au Vent," with its pheasant feather and upswept line. This model was designed by Lady Newborough of Bond Street.

Britain can indeed be proud of her many important achievements in the documentary field during the past twenty years.

THE DOCUMENTARY AND "THIS MODERN AGE"

by Michael Aherne

FOR twenty years Britain has led the world in the production of documentary films. Indeed, the very term "documentary" was coined by a Scot, John Grierson. Grierson, the pioneer of this movement, began his film career with the Empire Marketing Board; subsequently, he produced some memorable films for the G.P.O. Film Unit. His first picture, *Drifters*, was made in 1929; this served to establish an entirely new principle in film production—the "creative treatment of actuality," showing the life of one particular section of the community in relation to the nation as a whole.

These films, made under the auspices of the E.M.B. and the G.P.O., were, almost without exception, unqualified successes. Thus it was not very long before numerous documentaries had been sponsored by both government departments and various industrial organisations. In almost every case there was no profit motive whatever; perhaps the sole gain for those sponsors was that of prestige.

"This Modern Age"

Following in this tradition, J. Arthur Rank, in September, 1946, launched a documentary review, with the intention of concentrating on the important issues of our time. And for the past two years *This Modern Age* has appeared every month. These films circulate throughout Britain, the Dominions, the Colonies, the U.S.A., and to places as far afield as Hong Kong, Iceland and Egypt. To-day, documentaries certainly have a wide and ever-increasing audience. But in the early days Grierson and his followers had to be content with distribution to specialised audiences in schools and film societies. In fact, it was not until the war that the makers of documentaries really

succeeded in establishing themselves in the field of the commercial cinema; films like *Target for To-night* and *Western Approaches* were enjoyed by all film-goers. And at long last exhibitors reached the conclusion that it is possible for films to be both entertaining and educative at the same time. And furthermore—the public will pay to see these films! Indeed, according to a recent poll conducted by an independent circuit, British film-goers prefer *This Modern Age* to any other short on the screen, including the Disney cartoons.

New Technique in Documentary

For the technique of documentary has been steadily changing and improving. Generally, the early films consisted of pictorial information together with a spoken commentary. Now, they embody dialogue, dramatic action, and strong characterisation. For while features like *The Way Ahead*, *School for Secrets*, *The Overlanders*, and *Holiday Camp* undoubtedly gained in realism through the documentary influence, the documentaries, on the other hand, developed a stronger narrative value by the adoption of many feature-film methods. In some cases this new technique renders it necessary for documentary producers to use professional actors, although some factual-film makers still question the efficacy of this practice; they maintain that a bus driver is best played by a bus driver, a coal miner by a coal miner, and so on. However, Roger Manvell has something to say about this in his authoritative book, "Film."

"Documentary has got some remarkable acting results out of amateurs doing their jobs according to plan. It has been sensible enough not to ask them to do more. If a woman has just been through an air-

raid she will probably look like it, but that is not acting. But if you want her to reconstruct the raid, to go through the processes instead of merely the results of emotion, then the imaginative forbearance and technical control of the actress will be required... And quite right, too, or what's the good of paying professionals the salaries we do?"

Better than "March of Time"

This Modern Age is controversial without being biased. It has created styles of its own, ranging from the more or less straight narrative of *Antarctic Whale Hunt* to the kind of pictorial debate achieved by the juxtaposition of shots, which so enlivened *The British—Are They Artistic?* It is far more closely reasoned than the American *March of Time*, and has bravely dealt with such delicate topics as Palestine and the housing shortage. It has attempted to answer the question—"Will Britain Go Hungry?" And, in completely different vein, it has investigated the methods of Scotland Yard, and the manufacture of new fabrics. These, and some of the projected subjects—"The Italian Colonies," "The Dardanelles," "Oil," and "Women In Our Time"—enable us to form some idea of the wide variety of subjects covered.

Made by Experts

The first fourteen issues of *This Modern Age* were made by a triumvirate—Sergei Nolbandov, the producer, and his associates, J. L. Hodson and George Ivan Smith. Smith has now joined U.N.O.; Robert Waithman, former diplomatic correspondent of the "News Chronicle" has replaced him. Nolbandov, widely travelled and multilingual, is a man of considerable experience in feature production; he was associated with such films as

There Ain't No Justice, Proud Valley, Convoy, and Ships With Wings. Hodson, journalist, novelist and dramatist, here acts as literary editor; broadly speaking, he selects all the material while Nolbandov is responsible for the general shape of the film.

A team, comprising screenwriters, research workers and technicians, is permanently assigned to these productions; in the case of a highly specialised subject experts are always consulted. The different cameramen and units are all interchangeable; when faced with an insurmountable obstacle on any one particular story—outside factors, such as weather,

are very important—they journey to their base and begin a totally new production until they can return to more favourable conditions. There is a remarkable team spirit among these documentary workers; it is a matter of pride to them that their films give audiences the impression that they have been shot throughout by the same man.

The Words of Rotha

In 1935 Paul Rotha, in his book "Documentary Film," wrote this:—

"In brief there exists to-day, on the one hand, an urgent need for the stimulation of wide interest among the public in matters of national and

international significance, and, on the other, a gradual ripening of social consciousness among a small but increasing minority. There is no question, however, that if the future development of civilisation is to proceed with any prospect of security and social progress, a great deal must be done to spread knowledge about the simple workings of government and the essential facts of our economic and social ways and means."

The films and writings of this film maker with a social conscience have not been in vain; there is gratifying evidence of this each month in *This Modern Age*.

The Educational Film

Another field in which Britain leads the world.

ALTHOUGH the educational film is a very important off-shoot of the documentary, it is really quite different from it in that it is produced exclusively for schoolchildren. However, like the documentary, the educational film is of purely British origin.

Gaumont-British Instructional, a company within the Rank Organisation, has a library containing 300 such films; these are regularly hired out to teachers throughout the country. Many of these educational films are produced by G.B.I. itself, others by the British Council.

The Test

"When we are choosing a subject," writes Donald Mackenzie, head of G.B.I. Education Division, "the first test we apply is this: Is it material that cannot be better presented to the class through any other medium whatever?"

"If so we make the film. If not—if wall charts or still pictures, blackboard diagrams, books or the teacher's spoken word can get this particular subject matter over to the pupil equally well, then we do not make the film. If a film strip meets the case we present the material in that form.

"The result of this policy is that

our films help the teacher at just those points where he feels the limitations of other classroom aids. Take geography for instance and botany. No other medium can so powerfully awaken and educate the sense of wonder of young people by bringing to the classroom the life of the creatures far too small for the human eye to focus, or the actual growth of plants and their roots speeded up as much as 30,000 times."

By Harold M. Trisk

Important Award

G.B.I. began production in 1933. In 1939, having acquired unrivalled experience in what was then still a comparatively new field, the company adapted its resources to the training of the armed forces. However, it has now resumed its true work in the service of the schools. The first film to be completed in the post-war production programme, *Latitude and Longitude*, received an award at the 1947 Brussels Film Festival; it was declared "the best general-educational film submitted."

Atomic Energy

Perhaps the most ambitious G.B.I.

film, to date, is *Atomic Physics*, which appeared towards the end of 1947. This authoritative history of the development of atomic energy has aroused considerable interest, and has been widely shown, although it was primarily intended for the schoolroom alone. A series of films on elementary citizenship, explaining to pupils the workings of their town councils, is now almost complete, and another on human physiology is already in production.

International Aspect

The actual material is gathered from all parts of the world. At present G.B.I. is making educational films in South Africa, Rhodesia, Australia and Canada. Film House, London, and Imperial Studios, Elstree, are frequently visited by representatives of state departments from the Empire, the Americas, and a number of European countries, seeking both advice and material for the development of their own visual-education programmes.

This international aspect of the working of G.B.I. serves as a reminder that absolutely no effort is being spared in order that British educational films retain their present high position in the world.



BOBBY HENREY, nine-year-old Star of London Films' "The Fallen Idol"
Little Bobby's excellent performance has since earned him a four-year £30,000 contract.